

Dan A. Souther
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Long-Term Unemployment

I have been out of work for 2 years, with no prospects in sight, and this is my story.

I was a salesman, and worked selling food to the hospitality industry. When business became slow I was laid off. I have searched every week and have been told I am over qualified and there is just no business. Companies just are not hiring. I am going to school and taking care of my four year old daughter and 70 year old mother at the same time.

My wife had a good job, with an estate planning attorney, after our daughter was born, but was laid off because of lack of work. She was on unemployment but, found a job in a furniture store as a Customer Service Representative. She is over qualified for this position and seriously under paid. But, that is all she can find and it is not even full time work. Business for her store is almost non-existent. She is also going to school, as well. In the mean time she is looking for work, but she is being told she is over qualified for everything she applies for.

We owned a condo, but could not afford it anymore, so we had to move in with my mom and were helping her out with the bills, and taking care of the house. We were still struggling even when I was receiving my unemployment benefits. But now that I am no longer receiving benefits, and with no work prospects in sight, we don't know how we are going to pay all our bills. My mom is currently receiving Social Security, and now with the loss of my unemployment benefits, and her increasing medical bills and illnesses, we are on the brink of losing her house, as well.

If this happens, my family will have no choice but to move to the streets. I do not want that for my family. I am sure my mom can live with my sister, but she doesn't have room for all of us. Not to mention the strain of the extra burden on her, and her family, who have also been affected by the state of the economy.

I am sure with an extension to Tier V (an added six months), we can complete our studies and hopefully the economy would have turned around by then.